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REMARKS

Claims 1, 6, 13, 19, 24, 30, 37, 45, and 51 have been amended. Claims 1 – 57 are pending in this Application. Reconsideration and further examination is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §103

Claims 1 – 57 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Andersson et al. (US Pub No. 2002/0004843 A1) in view of Cheng (US Patent No. 6,600,724). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Applicant's exemplary claim 1 sets forth:

“A method for bridging network traffic in a networking device having a plurality of communication interfaces, the method comprising:

creating a bridged routing entry in a bridged routing table that is separate from a main routing table, the main routing table for routing network traffic, the bridged routing table for bridging the network traffic between a first communication interface and a second communication interface before requiring a bridge between the predetermined pair of communication interfaces;

subsequently determining that a bridge is needed between the first communication interface and the second communication interface; and

establishing the bridge between the first communication interface and the second communication interface using the bridged routing entry.”

The Applicants thus maintain a bridged routing table that is separate from a main routing table. The bridged routing table is used when a bridge is needed between communications interfaces.

As the Office Action points out, Andersson fails to teach or suggest a bridged routing table that is separate from a main routing table. The Office Action, however, asserts that Cheng discloses linear routing tables and that these linear routing tables are considered as a bridged routing table by the examiner. The Applicants disagree.

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The Applicants have specifically claimed a method including the step of “creating a bridged routing entry in a bridged routing table that is separate from a main routing table, the main routing table for routing network traffic, the bridged routing table for bridging the network traffic between a first communication interface and a second communication interface before requiring a bridge between the predetermined pair of communication interfaces”. Cheng fails to teach or suggest anything having to do with bridging network traffic between communications interfaces. In contrast, Cheng discloses using different routing tables for different classes of traffic – not for the same traffic. Thus the linear routing tables of Cheng are not equivalent to the bridged routing table that the Applicants have claimed. The Applicants therefore respectfully assert that Andersson and Cheng taken alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the Applicant’s claimed method including the step of “creating a bridged routing entry in a bridged routing table that is separate from a main routing table for bridging network traffic between a first communication interface and a second communication interface before requiring a bridge between the predetermined pair of communication interfaces”.

Furthermore, in order to establish a prima facie case of obviousness, any teaching or suggestion to make the combination must be found in the prior art and not based on Applicants’ disclosure. The Office Action asserts that it would be obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to “include storing the pre-computed recovery paths in the linear routing tables, which are separated from the main routing table, in Andersson’s system, as suggested by Cheng, to reduce memory size of the main routing table and to speed up look-up time when searching for routing information in absent of failure.” The Applicants fail to find any such suggestion made by

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Cheng. In contrast, Cheng characterizes the linear routing tables as disadvantageous for several reasons. Cheng states:

"The use of such conventional routing tables, however, has several undesirable effects. For example, because the shortest path information is maintained as a linear table, and because usually multiple such tables are required to accommodate all of the various traffic metrics and service classes, a considerable amount of memory is required just to store the tables."

Cheng thus teaches away from the Applicant's claimed invention. The motivation suggested in the Office Action therefore does not come from Cheng, but comes from the Applicant's disclosure. The rejection is thus improper and should be withdrawn.

For the reasons set forth above, the Applicants respectfully assert that independent claim 1 and its dependent claims are in condition for allowance. Independent claims 6, 13, 19, 24, 30, 37, 45, and 51 include limitations similar to those of claim 1, therefore these claims and their dependent claims are also believed allowable.

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Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Mary Steubing, Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-6664 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date

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